



Concordia


UNIVERSITY

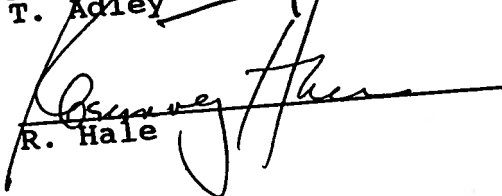
To: Dean Gail Valaskakis - Faculty of Arts & Science
From: The Ad Hoc Committee on Resource Allocation in the Faculty of Arts & Science
Date: June 26, 1996

We are hereby enclosing for your consideration the final report of our Committee.


We hope that the report will be useful to you as a step in your efforts to rebuild the Faculty of Arts & Science. We would be pleased to meet with you if that would be appropriate.


Please accept our best wishes for the summer.



T. Adley


R. Hale



J. Hillel


M. Singer

THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE: PROCESS AND PRINCIPLES

This advisory committee was struck by Faculty of Arts and Science Dean, Dr. Gail Valaskakis, in Spring 1996. The committee first met with the Dean in late March 1996 and was initially mandated to advise her on which departments in our Faculty should receive priority in the distribution of limited faculty resources (and particularly tenure-track positions). Both the unsuitability of much of the data available to the committee and the considerable impact of FALRIP (Faculty and Librarian Retirement Incentive Plan) on our Faculty, made it impossible to fulfill our original mandate. At a second meeting with the Dean in early May we agreed instead to advise her on the process and suggest guidelines for the awarding of very limited faculty resources. We also agreed to submit a draft report to her by the end of June.

Given the time constraints, ours was deliberately a small committee. Its members included Professors T. Adley (Chair, Chemistry and Biochemistry), R. Hale (Religion), J. Hillel (Chair, Mathematics and Statistics) and M. Singer (Chair, History). The committee met on fifteen occasions (mostly in May and June) and conducted itself in a collegial manner throughout its deliberations. The remarks that follow have received our unanimous endorsement.

CONTEXT

The academic year 1995/96 has undoubtedly been a watershed in the nineteen-year history of the Faculty of Arts and Science. The Faculty has just concluded a five year cycle of academic appraisals of individual units by producing a substantial "Self-Appraisal Report" which reflected eight months of deliberation by an eighteen member committee. Concurrently and very much in light of increasingly severe budgetary constraints, the Faculty's equally hard-working Advisory Committee on Planning and Priorities released a "Platform for Development: A Plan of Action. 1996-1997" which suggested a first round of major structural and program changes in the Faculty. Most recently, the University's early retirement program for professors and librarians (FALRIP) has resulted in the unexpected departure of more than 20% of the professors in the Faculty, including many of our most experienced and respected teachers and researchers. These three processes played a dominant role in shaping and directing our deliberations.

The committee was also challenged by the documentation available to it. The all-inclusive "mission statement" of the Faculty did not prove very helpful, especially in identifying priority departments and/or programs. The nearly thirty sets of appraisals of academic units (including self-appraisals, external appraisal reports and Faculty appraisal committee reports) have been rendered less meaningful by financial crises and faculty depletion. Departmental responses to the Lowy/Lightstone document proved to be incomplete and less useful than we had anticipated. Departmental statistics on revenues/expense ratios,

full-time equivalent enrollments and external funding for research are now out-of-date. Perhaps most significantly, the very recent impact of FALRIP on the Faculty and its departments, while substantial, has not yet been fully assessed.

The committee recognizes that this is a critical moment in the history of the Faculty of Arts and Science, a time of crisis which also promises opportunities for focused development. The committee has concluded that the Dean should as soon as possible take steps to collect the data necessary to reshape our Faculty in light of our strengths and available resources. It is in this spirit that the committee makes the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation One: Process

The Dean should ask each chair, as soon as possible and prior to the 1997/98 scheduling exercise, to report on how faculty retirements and resignations impact on his/her department in the longer term.

1. Each chair, in responding to the above request, should briefly address the impact of diminished faculty resources in the department on four areas:
 - a. undergraduate teaching (with particular attention to enrollment capacity and program coherence);
 - b. graduate teaching;
 - c. the research profile of the department;
 - d. the continued viability of the unit.
2. Each chair should also animate a discussion in his/her department on how to reconfigure the department (including, where appropriate, the strategic use of part-time, limited term and minimal, if any, full-time faculty replacements, as well as teaching assistants) so as to minimize the impact of diminished faculty resources. The results of this discussion should be included in the report to the Dean. (See Appendix One)
3. The Dean should then personally chair a small committee which would be mandated to receive and critically review departmental submissions; to advise the Dean on the distribution of faculty resources on the basis of established priorities; and to make recommendations to Arts and Science Faculty Council on the closure and/or amalgamation of units.

Recommendation Two: Principles for the Allocation of Faculty Resources

The present context offers the Faculty of Arts and Science opportunities for reaffirmation, as well as reorientation of its intellectual goals.

1. The Dean should apply the following principles in the allocation of any faculty resources (part-time and limited-term appointments, full-time and tenure track positions, and other teaching resources).

- a. to sustain undergraduate enrolments;
- b. to foster graduate studies where successful programs exist;
- c. to promote excellence in the area of research;
- d. to enhance the profile of the Faculty of Arts and Science in the community.

2. Part-time and LTA Positions:

a. In filling part-time and LTA positions for the 1996/97 academic year, every attempt should be made to cover the courses which are scheduled to be offered.

b. For the 1997/98 academic year priority should be given to requests from:

i. viable units where the need for and strategic use of part-time and LTA positions is appropriately justified;

ii. those departments or programs which are in transition and require temporary coverage of specific courses.

3. Tenure-track Appointments (Priorities for 1997/98)

a. Priority should be given to appointments which demonstrate application of the fundamental principles identified above.

b. Priority should be given to those appointments which, in addition to fulfilling the fundamental principles described above, meet one or more of the following criteria:

i. appointments which should not be filled temporarily by part-time or limited term appointments. In cases where a particular area has been affected by faculty retirement, chairs should be urged to

critically evaluate and justify the centrality of a given area and to demonstrate that the material or content is not duplicated elsewhere within the Faculty of Arts and Science.

ii. appointments which maximize efficient use of faculty resources by expanding and rationalizing interdisciplinary course offerings, such as joint appointments or multi-departmental endorsement of appointments in a single department.

iii. appointments in units for which statistical indicators confirm the viability of the department.

c. Serious consideration should also be given to appointments which may not represent a minimal retirement replacement, but which establish new, interdisciplinary programs in potentially high growth areas (such as environmental sciences and cultural studies).

4. Other Teaching Resources

a. Where departments have substantially increased class size and/or laboratory sections, teaching assistant and marker positions should be appropriately augmented.

b. Those departments which sustain and promote undergraduate enrollment through distance education should receive suitable infrastructure support.

c. Resources should also be allocated for the establishment of effective approaches to remedial work in literacy and basic skills.

Recommendation Three: The Revenue/Expense Indicator

The committee recommends that in allocating resources (and particularly faculty resources) the Dean should also consider the revenue/expense indicator for each department provided that:

1. the revenue/expense indicator is calculated in a somewhat modified way (see Appendix Two);
2. the indicator is based on post-FALRIP data with simulations of expenses based on resources (if any) which may be returned to each department.

Recommendation Four: Evaluation of Research and Graduate Training

The committee recommends that in order to evaluate and compare the research profiles and graduate training activities of each department, the Chairs of departments should be asked to provide not only general information on their programs, but also specific information on the research activities of faculty members and graduate students. (See Appendix Three)

Recommendation Five: Evaluation of Teaching

The committee recommends that given the importance of promoting and sustaining quality undergraduate teaching, that in hiring new faculty members a more appropriate balance should be struck between teaching and research abilities. (See Appendix Four)

Recommendation Six: The Mission Statement of the Faculty

The committee recommends that the current "mission statement" of the Faculty of Arts and Science should be replaced with a simple statement of objectives which could be more useful in focusing our future development.

**APPENDIX ONE
SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR CHAIR'S RESPONSE**

1. If your department were to receive no additional faculty resources, *as of June 1, 1997* ~~would you~~ *how would you*
maintain current enrollees.
2. a. discontinue specific course offerings or programs?
- b. cease duplication of day and evening courses or bi-campus offerings?
- c. increase the class size for specific courses?
- d. reduce remissions for administrative work in the department?
- e. consider amalgamation with a related department?
- f. specify additional solutions?

Briefly indicate the impact of such measures on your department.

2. How would your response to question one change if you were to be awarded only part-time LTA positions?

- a. how would you strategically implement the allocation?
- b. would you be compelled to pare down and/or suspend certain programs?

Briefly indicate the impact of such measures on your department.

3. How would your response to question one and two change if you were to awarded one or more full-time tenure track positions?

- a. on what grounds would you distinguish the priority area/s?
- b. how would you manage the area/s where there would be no replacement?

Briefly indicate the impact of such measures on your department.

APPENDIX TWO

THE REVENUE/EXPENSE INDICATOR

The Revenue/Expense indicator looks at the revenue generated by a department (i.e. the government grants for the student clientele served by the department, and interest generated from investment of research grants) and the total expenses of the department to the Faculty. It's a global indicator which reflects factors such as: full-time complement, average class size, average teaching load, and the number of student seats taught by a department. It is blind to issues of quality of the department (in terms of research, students it admits, and teaching).

The government grants for students vary for different sectors and cycles of study. They reflect the fact that it costs more to educate someone in the sciences because of the lab component, and that graduate education is more labour intensive. (The grants likely also reflect a certain disciplinary bias on the part of the Ministry of Education). It is hard to assess whether the funding formula is realistic. For example, all of Concordia's hard sciences have a relatively low R/E indicator - is this unique to Concordia or is it the same across all Quebec universities?

It is to be expected that in a faculty such as ours there will be some variations in the R/E indicator. Typically, departments with a large number of undergraduates, whether they are their own program students or come from other disciplines, will be "revenue generating" (e.g. political science, mathematics, sociology and anthropology, and economics). Departments (colleges) with a low R/E indicator may be able to reasonably justify their particular R/E indicator. However, it is legitimate for the Dean to examine these departments' practices and to decide what is acceptable and what is aberrant. In cases where departments have too many small classes, too many remissions, too large a support staff, or too small a graduate program, they should be made to change their way of conducting business.

The current way of computing the R/E indicator has several flaws that should be corrected for the sake of fairness. We recommend that:

1. The salary of joint appointments should be distributed fairly to the departments concerned.
2. That salaries of ex-administrators for the sake of computing departmental expenses should be their nominal salary and not their inflated salary (the assessment of departments' performance should not be influenced by decisions that are totally out of their control).
3. More complicated is the issue of seconded faculty to administration. It is certainly unfair for a department with a member occupying an administrative position to have BOTH the person's salary and the costs incurred for replacement

(LTA, part-time contracts) counted in the Expense portion. Since administrators (in most cases) do return to their department, the better indicator would be the one that considers their salary as part of the department's Expense (i.e. the department is considered at its full complement when computing the salary expenses) but NOT the costs of replacement. Such an indicator would point the department's performance "under normal conditions".

Even if these changes are taken into account in recalculating the 1994-95, the post-FALRIP situation renders this indicator totally out of date for most departments. The only R/E indicator which can be meaningful is a simulated one. Taking each department's 94-95 Revenues as fixed, one can then simulate several post-FALRIP Expenses' scenarios (the first, involving no new resources at all, other scenarios involving a combination of full-time replacements, LTAs, and extra part-time sections) and then come up with several possible R/E indicators for each department.

APPENDIX THREE

EVALUATION OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE TRAINING

Post-FALRIP conditions require the updating of existing data on research and graduate training at Concordia University. Furthermore, the committee found some of the data not very useful - for example, listing the total amount of external funding by department does not provide an adequate basis for making comparisons. Some data is not very clear and might not be reliable - for example, how are graduate FTEs counted? How are research funding for inter-university centres and team grants involving several departments reported by each department?

The committee recommends that in preparing their submissions about research and graduate training, Chairs should also include the following information:

1. Faculty members

- a. What percentage of the faculty (after FALRIP) are actively engaged in scholarly work?
- b. What percentage of active scholars receive funding from established external sources (NSERC, SSHRC, FCAR, NSF, MRC, etc.)? From contracts?
- c. How do the average grants per active researcher compare with departments in the same discipline at other universities?
- d. What awards or special recognition of scholarly activity has been bestowed on members of the department in the past 3 years (e.g. plenary speaker in an international conference, honorary degree, special prizes, heading an adjudicating committee of a major granting agency, etc.)?

2. Graduate students

- a. How many masters and doctoral students are there in the department? (A possible way to count FTEs is to consider each full-time doctoral student as a 1/3 for THREE consecutive years from the point of entering the program. A full-time Masters student may be counted as a 1/2 FTE for two consecutive years. This scheme would involve keeping track of each individual graduate student).
- b. How many PhD's and Masters' were granted to students in the department for the past three years?

c. What percentage of your graduate students hold a major graduate award (e.g. FCAR, NSERC, Concordia Graduate Fellowship, etc.)?

d. Special recognition of achievement for students graduating from the department's program(s)?

APPENDIX FOUR EVALUATION OF TEACHING

The Faculty of Arts and Science mission statement makes explicit reference to the goal of "promoting excellence in teaching," yet, the task of adequately defining or, even more, of quantifying excellence in teaching is formidable. Relying almost exclusively on student evaluations, judging excellence in teaching remains a critical factor in peer review and promotions. While student evaluations may have a limited use in the evaluation of an individual instructor's teaching, they did not prove useful in assessing the teaching excellence of given units or in comparing meritorious teaching across departments. In an internal memorandum focusing on "Overall Ratings of Course and Teacher Effectiveness," Ron Smith, Director of the Learning Development Office, pointed out that "comparisons within departments can be useful in terms of identifying areas for further investigations as to potential problems, (but that) it is probably inappropriate, and not very helpful, to compare the overall summary statistics across all the courses between different departments. The task of teaching across the disciplines may be sufficiently different in terms of the nature of the content, as well as the context and make-up of the courses (class-size, levels, service, required, etc.), so as to render comparisons across departments misleading." Nevertheless, the advisory committee recognizes the necessity of quality teaching in sustaining and increasing enrolments. Therefore we recommend that a demonstrable commitment to quality teaching be a critical factor in the hiring of all teaching positions and regarded as equally essential to confirmed research potential in the filling of tenure-track appointments.

1. The committee suggests that a departmental commitment to quality teaching include:
 - a. the institution of hiring practices which carry a teaching component as well as presentation of research;
 - b. evidence of departmental instructional development (e.g. training and supervision of part-time positions and regular pedagogy meetings);
 - c. the teaching of basic skills, as appropriate.
2. The committee also noted several concerns in addressing the issue of teaching excellence.
 - a. How do classroom hours per credit compare with other universities in Quebec? (Concordia falls short of the three hours of class time for a 3-credit course in other Quebec universities.)

b. How will increasingly larger classes affect student enrollment? (Report on student responses to academic appraisals, OIR, 11 March 1996 indicates that students identify smaller classes as an important feature of their education at Concordia.)

c. Would streamlining the onerous and protracted process of curricular alteration assist units in more quickly addressing necessary changes? (At present a two-year process is required for effecting curricular changes.)